

Railroad Retirement Board

§ 226.74

(d) A benefit paid by the Veteran's Administration.

(e) Private disability benefits.

(f) Amounts paid under the Federal Employers' Liability Act (FELA).

(g) Benefits based on need, such as welfare benefits or supplemental security income.

§ 226.73 Changes in reduction amount.

The reduction amount is not changed when a tier I benefit increases because of a recomputation or a general adjustment in annuity rates, such as a cost-of-living increase. However, the reduction amount may change for the following reasons:

(a) *A spouse or divorced spouse becomes entitled to a tier I benefit after the effective date of the reduction.* The reduction amount is recomputed as if the spouse or divorced spouse were entitled to a tier I benefit on the date the reduction first applied. The new reduction amount applies beginning with the date the spouse or divorced spouse tier I benefit begins.

Example: An employee became entitled to an annuity with a tier I component of \$500 on May 1, 1991. He was also receiving a state disability benefit of \$300 a month based on employment not covered under the Social Security Act. On June 1, 1991, the employee's tier I increased to \$520.70. On October 1, 1991, the employee's wife becomes entitled to an annuity with a tier I benefit of \$260.00. The tier I amount (\$250) that would have been payable to the wife on May 1, 1991 (assuming she had been eligible for a benefit at that time) is used to determine the reduction for other disability benefits beginning October 1, 1991.

(b) *The tier I benefit of a spouse or divorced spouse annuity ends after the effective date of the reduction.* The new reduction amount is computed using the tier I rate to which the employee was entitled when the reduction first applied. The new reduction amount applies beginning with the month after the month in which the spouse or divorced spouse tier I benefit ends.

(c) The average current earnings are redetermined, as shown in § 226.74.

(d) *The amount of the other disability benefit changes.* The reduction amount is recomputed to use the new benefit rate beginning with the date on which the new rate is payable. Any increases in the tier I amounts which were effective

after the reduction first applied are not included in computing the new reduction amount.

Example: The employee's tier I benefit is \$500 on May 1, 1991, when the annuity is first reduced for other disability benefits. The tier I increases to \$520 effective June 1, 1991. When the amount of the disability benefit changes on October 1, 1991, \$500, not \$520, is used as the employee tier I amount in recomputing the reduction amount.

§ 226.74 Redetermination of reduction.

(a) *General.* The average current earnings are redetermined in the second year after the year the reduction for other disability benefits was first applied and every third year after that. The redetermined amount is used only if it results in a lower reduction amount. The new reduction amount is effective with January of the year after the redetermination is made.

(b) *Redetermined average current earnings.* The average current earnings are redetermined by multiplying the initial average current earnings amount by—

(1) The average of the total wages (including wages that exceed the maximum used in computing social security benefits) of all persons for whom wages were reported to the Secretary of the Treasury for the year before the year of redetermination, divided by the average of the total wages reported to the Secretary of the Treasury for 1977 or, if later, the year before the year for which the reduction was first computed. If the result is not a multiple of \$1, it is rounded to the next lower multiple of \$1; or

(2) If the reduction was first computed before 1978, the average of all taxable wages reported to the Secretary of Health and Human Services for the first quarter of 1977, divided by the average of all taxable wages reported to the Secretary of Health and Human Services for the first quarter of the year before the year for which the reduction was first computed. If the result is not a multiple of \$1, it is rounded to the next lower multiple of \$1.